

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7471

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FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO BOMBAY AND MADRAS FROM
CALCUTTA MAR 7, 1975 REPEATED FOR YOU

QUOTE

CALCUTTA 0576

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, IN

SUBJ: NAXALITE RELEASE: THIS TIME A LOCAL APPEAL

REF: A. CALCUTTA 1850 B. NEW DELHI 11837

1. ANOTHER APPEAL FOR THE RELEASE OF PROMINENT NAXALITIES CURRENTLY
HELD IN PRISON OR UNDER TRIAL HAS BEEN MADE BY A RATHER IMPRESSIVE
GROUP OF CALCUTTA INTELLECTUALS, JOURNALISTS, ACADEMICS AND FILM/
THEATRE PEOPLE. THE SIGNERS OF THE PETITION (WHICH HAS BEEN
PRINTED IN SEVERAL LOCAL NEWSPAPERS AND JOURNALS) REPRESENT A
POLITICAL RANGE FROM PROMINENT NAXALITE SYMPATHIZERS, THROUGH
CPI(M) AND CPI SUPPORTERS, TO OUTSPOKEN ANTI-COMMUNISTS. ONLY
THE CONGRESS PARTY IS NOT REPRESENTED IN THE LIST.

2. TEXT OF APPEAL: QUOTE THE GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL HAS SET
UP A TRIBUNAL, NAMELY, THE FIFTH TRIBUNAL FOR THE TRIAL OF THE
SO-CALLED NAXALITES, ON CHARGES OF WAGING WAR AGAINST THE STATE
AND ATTEMPTING TO OVERTHROW THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT BY VIOLENT
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MEANS. THE LIST INCLUDES WELL-KNOWN LEADERS LIKE KANU SANYAL,

NAGESWAR RAO, JANGAL SANTHAL, SOURIN BOSE, PROF. NISITH BHATTACHARYA, AZIZUL HOQUE, ASHIM CHATTERJI AND SANTTOSH RANA.

"ALMOST ALL OF THEM, WE FIND, HAVE ISSUED STATEMENTS AT DIFFERENT TIMES, ADMITTING THAT THE POLICY OF INDIVIDUAL TERRORISM IS WRONG. ON THE OTHER HAND IT MAY BE ARGUED THAT WHATEVER BE THEIR IDEAS AND OPINIONS, IN A DEMOCRATIC STATE, EVERY CITIZEN HAS A RIGHT TO EXPRESS AND PROPAGATE HIS POLITICAL IDEALS TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE EXISTING PATTERN OF SOCIETY, PARTICULARLY WHEN THESE CHANGES ARE DIRECTED TOWARDS REMOVAL OF THE POVERTY AND EXPLOITATION OF THE PEOPLE. IF ONE STEPS BEYOND THE LIMIT OF THE EXISTING LAW IN GIVING SHAPE TO ONE'S POLITICAL IDEOLOGY, THE GOVERNMENT MAY HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO EXERT ITS POWER AGAINST SUCH A PERSON, BUT EVEN THEN IT MUST BE REALIZED THAT EVERY LAW REQUIRES THE SANCTION OF THE PEOPLE AND IS NEVER UNCHANGEABLE.

" INCIDENTALLY, WE MAY REFER TO MANY CONSPIRACY CASES DURING THE BRITISH REGIME, SUCH AS MEERUT CONSPIRACY CASE, KANPUR BOLSHEVIK CONSPIRACY CASE, ETC. IN THOSE DAYS ALSO CHARGES LIKE WAGING WAR AGAINST HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR WERE BROUGHT, BUT IN COURSE OF TIME THE VERY STATE WHICH BROUGHT CHARGES AGAINST THE FREEDOM-FIGHTERS WAS FORCED TO GO OUT OF EXISTENCE. AT THAT TIME THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE, INCLUDING MEN LIKE ROMAIN ROLLAND AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE, WAS RAISED IN FAVOUR OF THEIR RELEASE, AND MANY OF THE CONVICTED PERSONS WERE EVENTUALLY DISCHARGED.

"A FEW MONTHS AGO, THE GOVERNMENT RELEASED 95,000 PAKISTANI WAR PRISONERS INCLUDING 195 PERSONS WHO WERE ACCUSED OF COMMITTING THE "WORST CRIME OF HISTORY". IN RELEASING THEM THE GOVERNMENT WENT BEYOND THE LIMIT OF THE EXISTING LAW AND NORMS OF CIVILISED BEHAVIOR. IF THE GOVERNMENT THINKS THAT THE ACCUSED IN THE FIFTH TRIBUNAL ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN THOSE PAKISTANI WAR PRISONERS, SUCH A VIEW BECOMES OBVIOUSLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE CIVILISED PEOPLE OF THE MODERN WORLD.

"THOUGH MANY OF US DO NOT SUPPORT THE CHANGED OR UNCHANGED POLITICAL VIEWS OF THE PRISONERS, STILL WE BELIEVE THAT THEY HAD STAKED THEIR LIVES FOR THE SAKE OF "LIBERATION OF MAN" FROM POVERTY AND HUNGER. WE CONSIDER THEIR IDEALISM, HONESTY AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SINCERITY AS TREASURES OF OUR SOCIETY. IN FACT MANY OF THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN HAVE REFERRED TO THE HONESTY, SINCERITY AND SACRIFICE OF THESE PEOPLE WITH REVERENCE.

" WE HAVE ALSO NOTED WITH DEEP ANXIETY THAT DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS MANY UNDERTRIAL NAXALITE YOUTH WERE BEING BRUTALLY MURDERED IN

JAILS. HUNDREDS OF YOUNG BOYS AND GIRLS ARE FAILING TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN NORMAL LIFE EVEN AFTER THEIR RELEASE FROM THE PRISONS OWING TO THE CEASELESS HUNT OF THE OFFICIAL AND NON-OFFICIAL PRESERVERS OF LAW AND ORDER OF THE COUNTRY. HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND ASSAULT ARE BEING ADDED TO THEIR SUFFERINGS OF POVERTY AND JOBLESSNESS.

"WE DEMAND AN END TO THE PRESENT INTOLERABLE SITUATION AND THE RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS FORTHWITH AND WE APPEAL TO ALL THE ARTISTS, WRITERS, SCIENTISTS, LAWYERS, JOURNALISTS, TEACHERS AND ALL CONSCIENTIOUS PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE PARTY OR CREED, TO ORGANISE A UNITED MOVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THIS DEMAND. UNQUOTE.

3. SIGNATORIES INCLUDE: SATYAJIT RAY (FILMMAKER), SANTOSH KUMAR GHOSH (ASSOCIATE EDITOR, INFLUENTIAL ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA DAILY), MRINAL SEN (FILMMAKER), PANNALAL DAS GUPTA, (MEMBER, STATE PLANNING BOARD), SAMAR SEN (EDITOR, FRONTIER), AMAL DUTTA (LAWYER FOR HARCOS/FLETCHER).

4. COMMENT: WE WOULD BE SURPRISED IF THIS STATEMENT, PER SE, HAD ANY MORE AFFECT ON THE GOWB OR GOI THAN THE EARLIER INTERNATIONAL APPEAL (REFTELS). HOWEVER, COUPLED WITH THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEETING WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN DELHI THIS SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, AND WHICH IS EXPECTED TO GENERATE SOME FURTHER STORIES ABOUT WEST BENGAL JAIL CONDITIONS AND THE NUMBERS OF PRISONERS (NAXALITE AND OTHERS) IN THEM, IT MIGHT JUST HAVE SOME MARGINAL IMPACT. SIGNED ROSSELOT
UNQUOTE
SAXBE

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